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CHAPTER VI.

EASY PREY. SUALLY when a man through inclination or environment decides that the manners of his people will not serve for him and that the customs of the land or purpose he outdoes even the natives in his conformation to the existing

Horace Granger-Simpson-the Granger was but a recent innovation due to the belief that Simpson by itself was altogether too hopelessly plebeian to attract even a modicum of attentionhad consorted with the gilded youth of several capitals, and his education had progressed to such an extent that the youth of Kokono would have stoned him instantly upon his arrivar at the town depot.

He ambled with a rocking gait, attention, and he leaped at it. drawn from the guardsmen he had so carefully watched, down the steps or the hotel on to the terrace, and his aback. attire would have attracted notice from a Hindoo 'fol. He wore spotlessty white flannels, white shoes pipeclayed to a dazzling degree, a thoroughly side so many years, and there's been a pale blue scarf held together with h | ap; but he's never opposed anything

For an instant Mme. la Comtesse looked at him and then, with a little cry of greeting, rushed toward the steps and took both his startled hands "Ah, my dear Horace Granger

Scempson!" she said excitedly. "Has your sister told you?"
Horace swallowed once or twice savagely and then made a heroic effort to keep down the radiance that was choking him, made two effectual dabs at his eyes with the handkerchief he took from his sleeve and responded joyfully, though brokenly:

She has, indeed. I assure you I am quite overcome, my dear friends. Really, I assure you."

With a silvery laugh Mme. de Champigny stepped backward from him, making a little courtesy as she did so The earl came forward with outstretched hands and grasped one of Morace's between both his own.

"My dear young friend," he said "Not at all-not at all." As the remark seemed a trifle am-

biguous, Horace looked at him inquiringly, but, reading reassurance in his face, replied instantly: "I assure you I am. I assure you !

am. It's quite overpowering, isn't it?" countess regarded him and said softly: "Ah, poor M. Horace!"

From his sprawled attitude in the chair the honorable Almeric drawled a protest. I say! Don't take it that way, you

know. She's very happy." Horace recovered himself instantly future Countess of Hawcastle."

nd crossed the terrace onickly to grasp the hand of the bridegroom to be. The fact that it was as limp as a mackerel did not worry him an instant. "She's worthy of it-she's worthy of ft! I know she is! And when will it

be, St. Aubyn?" he said. "Enchanting!" cried the countess enthusiastically. "So clear is his grasp

of the case, eh? Hawcastle flashed her a giance and

turned to Horace. "Oh, the date?" he said doubtfully.

"I dare say within a year-two

There was another little cry of protest from the countess, and the earl glared at her menacingly. Horace started, too, and seemed to be about to enter a positive objection, but he contented himself with saving:

"Oh, but I say, you know, isn't that putting it jolly far off? The thing's settled, isn't it? Why not say a month instead of a year?" "Ha-hum!" said the earl. "Oh, if

you like! I don't know that there is any real objection." "I do, indeed," returned Horace.

"See here! Why not let them marry here in Italy?" Hawcastle could scarcely conceal his

satisfaction, while Mme. de Champigny executed a bit of a pas sepl behind Horace's back. "Ah, the dashing methods of you Americans!" returned the earl smil-

ingly. "You carry things on so! Next you'll be saying, 'Why not here at Sor-"Well, and why not, indeed?" asked

Horace instantly. "And then," went on Hawcastle, smiling, "and then it will be, 'Why not

within a fortnight?" "Right-o!" cried Horace. "And why not within a fortnight?"

Almeric sat up and stared at his no ble father and brother-in-law to be but the earl smiled once more that cheerful smile and waved a deprecating hand. "Ah, you wonderful people! You are

whirlwinds, yet I see no reason why it should not be in a fortnight." "Oh, here! I say, you know!" interjected Almeric, heaving himself erect

in the chair and waving a protesting crop. The earl turned on him in-

"As I say, dear boy, why not?" he inquired suavely, and Almeric wilted immediately.

"Just as you say, governor," he answered meekly. "Enchanting! Brava!" cried the

countess, and Hawcastle again turned to the palpitating Horace.

"My son is all impatience," he murmured, fixing the young man with his

"Quite so, quite so!" answered Almeric dazedly, and his father went on: "Shall we dispose of the necessary little details at once-the various minor arrangements, the-er-er-settlement?" and interrupted himself with a friendly laugh and patted Horace upon the back. "Of course as men of the world-our world-you understand there are formalities in the nature of

Horace, who was in the seventh heaven of delight at the approaching

alliance between one of the ancient houses of Kokomo, Ind., and the houerable line of Hawcastle, broke in

eagerly: "Quite so, of course! I know! Cer

tainly! Perfectly!" "Then we'll have no difficulty about that, my boy. I'll wire my solicitor his adoption are more applicable to his tonight and he'll be here within two days," said the earl carelessly. "If you wish to consult your own solicitor

you can cable him, of course," Suddenly Horace seemed taken with n fit of embarrassment.

"The fact is, Lord Hawcastle," he said, "I've a notion that our solicitor -Ethel's man of business, that isfrom Kokomo, Ind., where our governor lived-in fact, a sort of guardian of hers-may be here at any time. I've heard from friends that he is coming in this direction."

The word had caught Hawcastle's "A sort of guardian? What sort eh?" he inquired, seemingly taken

"I really can't say." replied Horace apologetically. "Never saw him that I know of. You see, we've been on this British straw hat, chamois gloves and ho occasion for this fellow to look us Ethel wrote for. He seems to be an easy going old chap."

ils," he answered her.

dear?"

represents, sis!"

Horace sighed.

thousand pounds."

cient a house?"

took her hand.

those of incredulity.

She smiled at him fondly.

Hoddy-the nobler things?"

her eyes.

castle' "-

brother.

For a moment she turned away and

then looked at him straight in the

"You're fond of Almeric, aren't you, Hoddy? You admire him, don't you

"Certainly. Why, think of all be

"Ab. ves. Hoddy! Crusader's blood

flows in his veins. It is the nobility

"It will be as soon as the settlement

is made and arranged. It will take

about all your share of the estate, sis,

but it's worth it-a bundred and fifty

Ethel lifted the book to the level

"What better use could be made

a fortune. Hoddy, than to maintail

He looked at her affectionately an

"It does seem impossible that we

were born in Indiana, doesn't it, si

ter?' And the tones of his voice we

"But isn't it good that the

'made his pile,' as the Americans

and let us come over here while

"The nobler things - the things! Why, sis, when old Ratle dies I'll be saying offhand

know, 'My sister, the Countess of

For a moment Ethel

thoughtful and then turned

"You don't imagine the

friend, this old Mr. Pike, w

be queer, de you?"

were young to find the nobier this

the state and high condition of so ar

that must be within him that I have

plighted my troth to. I am ready to

marry him when they wish!"

"Hum!" said Hawcastle doubtfully "Would he consent to your sister's marriage or the matter of a settis ment?"

Horace laughed cheerfully. "I have no doubt of it. If he has the slightest sense of duty toward my sister he'll be the first to welcome the alliance, won't he?"

"Then when he and my solicitor comthey can have an evening together over a lot of musty papers, and the thing will be done. Again, my boy, I wel come you to our family. God bles: you!"

He wrung Horace's hand again an turned away as if to hide his emotion but really to wink at the countess. "I'm overpowered, you know-real ly overpowered, you know," stammere

Horace, fanning himself desperately with his hat. "Come, Almeric," said the earl, and as the youthful heir to his house aros languidly he sidled close to the count

ess and whispered in her ear: "Let him know it's a hundred and fifty thousand." Then he and Almeric went up the

steps into the hotel, leaving Horaco With a look of commiseration the and the countess gazing at each other delightedly. She crossed over to him impulsively

and, taking both his hands again, said "My friend, I am happy for you." "Think of it!" said Horace joyously "In a fortnight at the most dear ok Ethel will be the Hon. Mrs. St. Aubyn

"Yes," replied the countess, with drawing her hands and picking up he parasol, "and there is but the little a" rangement of the settlement between your advocate and Lord Hawcastle's But you Americans-you laugh at sucl things. You are big, so big, like your

country! Horace followed her across the ter race to the wall.

"Ah, believe me, dear countess," h said, "the great world-your world countess - has thoroughly alienated

The countess turned her shape! head and looked at him admiringly and with a touch of irony at the su: prise she was about to give him.

"Ah, you retain one quality. You are careless, you are free," and she laid her right hand upon his arm, and Hor

ace thrilled at the intimate touch. "Well," he laughed, "perhaps in those things I am American, but it others I fancy I should be thought something else, shouldn't I?"

She laughed openly at him now, bu earnestly withal, and said;

"You are a debonair man of the world, and yet you are still American in that you are abominably rich. The settlement-such matter as that, over which a Frenchman, an Italian, might Besitate-you laugh. Such matter as £150,000-you set it aside, you laugh You say, 'Oh, yes; take it!'

For a moment she feared that Hor ace would fall over the low parapet so white did his face become and then so flushed, but the boy was game al through. The generations of simple Indiana stock came to his rescue, and he steeled himself with an effort and

replied quietly: "A hundred and fifty thousand pounds! Why, that's seven hundred and fifty thous-I say, countess, she couldn't use the money to better ad

vantage!" There was real admiration in the Frenchwoman's glance this time, for she had lost none of the little byplay. and she admired the courage of the youngster. So she said:

"My friend, how wise you are!" As she spoke she turned in time to see Ethel come down the steps of the hotel with a book beneath her arm and ran to her, clasping her in her arms and kissing her.

> CHAPTER VII. SNUBBED!

ARGESSE, sweet Countess of Hawcastle!" the woman cried. "Largesse! And au revoir! Adieu! I leave you with your dear brother!"

She ran quickly up the steps with a flirt of her parasol, and Horace took his sister's hand with tears in his eyes. "Dear old sis! Dear old pal!" he said, and she turned a radiant look upon him

"Isn't it glorious, Hoddy?" she said with exalted tone. "Look!" and held up the book she carried. "It's Burke's 'Peerage.' And Froissart's 'Chronicles'-I've been reading it all over again. The St. Aubyns were at Grecy and Agincourt, and St. Aubyn will be "They want it to be your name soon,

hap, easy to hanshouldn't like Alblok we had queer sort, and he might to shockingly Amerbear that, Hoddy! genuine pathos other respond-

he said. "None solicitor, need see Hawcastle. rour outside the gates he notes of the tarmandolins and gui uts and cheers and Americano!" and Borace ran to the were closed, and the

that?" she asked trenm Lady Creech, all he a flutter from the hotel. At a glance to set ber down for an aristo re was no doubt of it. From ost Up of her white hair to her polld shoe she was an

f your fellow countrymen, my said to Ethel. "Your Amerally too? -Opericans, Lady Creech!" vin he ou know. One could be volterated

purchat, now!" reiterated paid!

s boot with his crop susted with his mirth; he o'e off into a chair and burst

what a go! Motor cat on the way here. One wales, a German chap, dis chanfleur, and the other es, a German chap, dis of your Yankee chaps a two silly little denkeys a you know, to pull the ma n, as they can't make it he puts himself in th them and proceeds, at be populace. Ha. ha!" l long and loudly.

p to this Yankee chap. -be was pulling and tug eu see-and I said. Ther e of you in a row, aren' ofilm and the two don attle picked the best of No meaning to it wow, I rather think.

"English papers, governor? I'll take! the pink un. I'm off." And he picked up the tinted sheet as he spoke. Ethel came up to him and touched him or the arm. "Going for a stroll, Almeric? Would

you like me to go with you, dear?" He looked at her vacantly for an instant and the stammered:

"Well, I rather thought I'd have ; quiet bit of reading, you know." Ethel drew back quickly and said in a very small voice; "Oh, I beg your pardon."

Then she sat down hurriedly by Lord

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